

VZCZCXRO7265  
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC  
DE RUEHBJ #4553 3510920  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 160920Z DEC 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1414  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0252  
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 0014  
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 0732  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0343  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4687  
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA 0041  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0649  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2081  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 004553

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/CM  
STATE FOR PM/PPA DAVID GLANCY AND PM ISO JEFF FREDERICK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/16/2018  
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PBTS](#) [PHSA](#) [PTER](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: CHINA ON ENHANCING EFFORTS TO COMBAT PIRACY

REF: A. BEIJING 4520  
[1](#)B. BEIJING 4373  
[1](#)C. STATE 125514

Classified By: Acting Political Section Chief Ben Moeling for reasons 1  
.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (C) PolOff and Naval Attache on December 16 discussed the possibility of China sending a PLA naval vessel off the Horn of Africa to combat piracy with PLA Academy of Military Science Department of Strategic Studies Senior Fellow and Senior Colonel Chen Zhou and PLA National Defense University Research Center for Crisis Management Deputy Director and Senior Colonel Ouyang Wei. Chen said China has not yet decided whether to participate in the international effort to combat piracy off Somalia.

[1](#)2. (C) Several factors are affecting the decision, Chen asserted. From a policy perspective, Chen said China's military has a "mainland protection tradition" and is therefore "not used to going beyond its borders." Even China's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations is limited to providing non-combat troops, Chen noted, so a "shift in policy" to send combat forces overseas "requires a process" and "a change in mindset."

[1](#)3. (C) In addition to the question of willingness, Chen asserted that "actual PLA Navy ability is not sufficient or adequate for long distance missions." As an example, Chen cited China's inability to provide meaningful disaster relief assistance after the December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. However, said Chen, "if China decides to participate, the PLA will make vigorous efforts, despite its limitations, to honor that decision."

[1](#)4. (C) Deputy Director Ouyang noted that any scenario for combating piracy would be multilateral in nature, raising questions about each nation's participation and role, cooperative procedures and the command structure that "China will need answered before engaging." Questions about logistical support, including intelligence sharing, supply sourcing and base utilization also need to be addressed. Ouyang said that, although the PLA Navy "has never operated that far from China," it is "conducting a study" of the issues. To further the study, Ouyang said "it would be

helpful if the United States provided examples of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement."

Piccuta